



## **Adopted resolution**

### **on the protection of the Greek forests**

**The European Green Party accuses the Construction Company "Kissos" that claims from the Greek ecologists 13,5 million EUR in order to develop the mountain of Hortiatis into housing land plots.**

The construction company "Kissos" and its sole two stakeholders, the municipality of Hortiatis and the Mechanic Association, filed at the First Instance Court of Thessaloniki a lawsuit against the members of the "Ecological Movement of Thessaloniki", Michalis Tremopoulos, Yannis Tziolas and Alexandros Georgopoulos. They are asking 13,5 million EUR for material damages and moral distress. Michalis Tremopoulos was at the top of the Greek greens European list.

The plaintiffs claim that they have suffered damages because for many years the aforementioned ecologists developed systematic action against their interests, namely the housing construction at a scale of 203 hectares, in the area "Isenli", on the mountain of Hortiatis above the city of Thessaloniki.

They accuse the ecologists for pursuing before the Second Instance Administrative Court the cancellation of their construction permits (2002, 2003) upon the claim that Article 28, Greek Law 2742/1999, does not apply in the case of "Kissos". The decision of the court is pending.

They also blame the ecologists for misleading the Forestry Agency of Thessaloniki through their written and verbal interventions, which resulted to the prohibition of the company's construction works. This prohibition allegedly "shook company's credibility and its image towards Thessaloniki's public".

It is really outrageous that the persons responsible for the housing and deforestation of Hortiatis Mountain ask to be compensated by the ecologists. The alleged "illegality" of the latter was the filing of lawsuits at the competent courts with the intention to defend the common interest and the forest character of the region.

In particular the ecologists hold in their hands:

- a) 22 documents of the competent forestry authorities (one of them is of the Minister of Agriculture) who recognise the forest character of the region
- b) the decision 5/1995 of the Committee for the Solution of Forest Disputes in Thessaloniki, which adjudicated that the area of "Kissos" is a forest and must become a forested
- c) the important decision 2757 and 2758/1984 of the plenary session of the Supreme Administrative Court of Greece that cancelled their first two construction licenses.

The European Green Party expresses its full support to the right of Greek ecologists to defend the environment and common interest that is an indisputable constitutional right and obligation (Article 24, par.1 of the Greek Constitution). We remind that in addition, and according to the provision of Article 2 of the Greek Law 998/1979, the forests and forest regions constitute "national capital" and their protection is an obligation of state authorities and citizens as well.

The European Green Party asks the company to stop its plans for housing in the forest as well as to cancel every lawsuit against the members of the "Ecological Movement of Thessaloniki" Michalis Tremopoulos, Yannis Tziolas and Alexandros Georgopoulos. The Greek ecologists with our support remain faithful to

the defence of common interests and any efforts to terrorise them will succeed in nothing else but the strengthening of their and our intention to continue fighting.

The Green MEPs shall call the Commission to demand from the Greek government to take measures for the protection of the Greek forests without further delay, to prevent the destruction of the European natural resources and the violation of the EU legislation.